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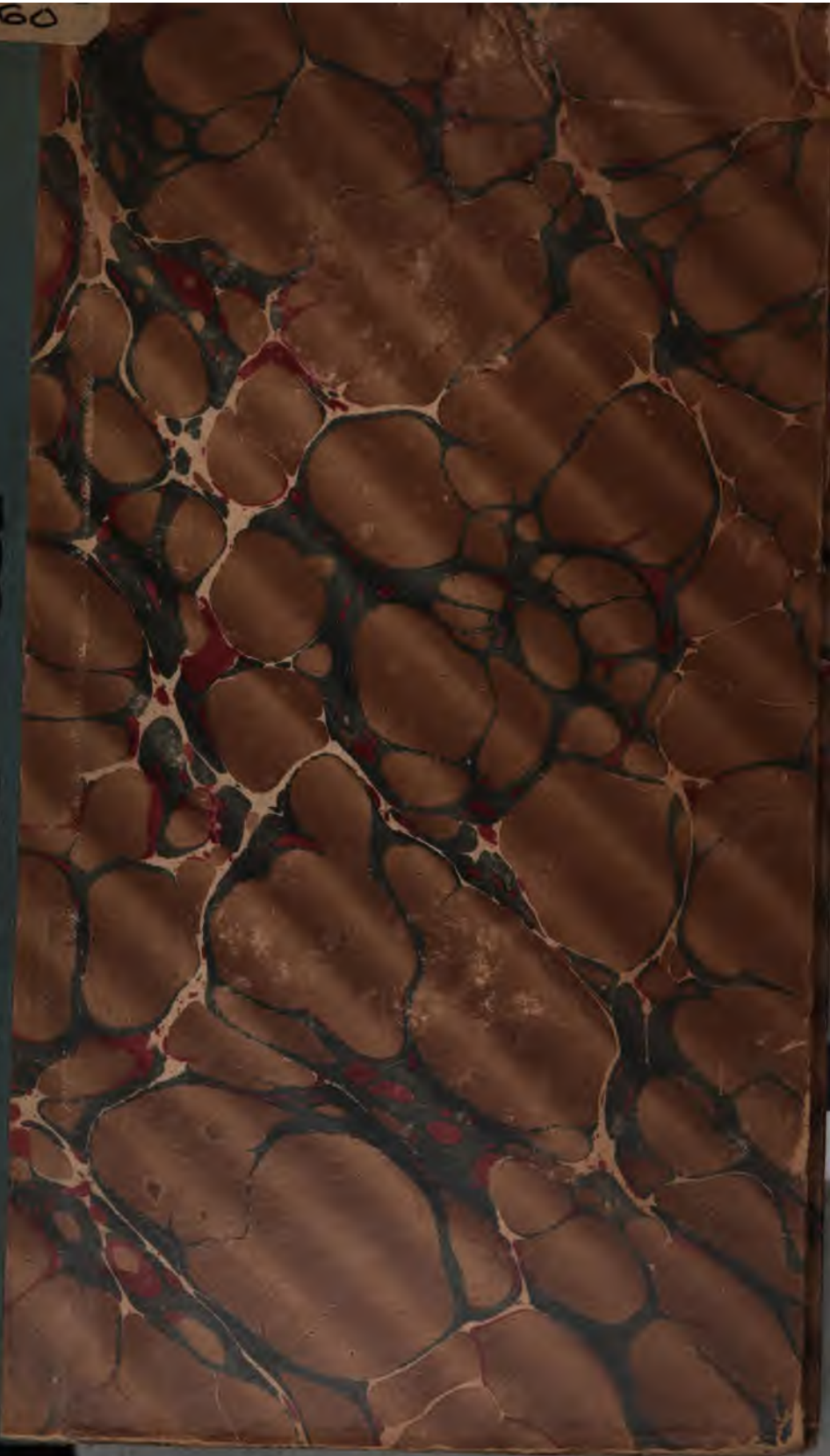
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Cram - Address - 1852

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FROM

Miss Anna Barrows



AN
ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE DEDICATION OF THE

Town House, in Bridgton,



JANUARY 8, 1852.

B. THURSTON, PRINTER, PORTLAND, ME.

1870
March 1st
To the Hon. Secy of the Interior
Washington D.C.

Dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst. in relation to the application of the late John Smith for a grant of land for the purpose of settling the same upon his heirs and assigns. I am sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Smith, and am sure that his family will be able to establish their claim to the land. I have no objection to the grant of the land to them, and will be glad to issue a patent for the same as soon as the necessary papers are presented to me. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. M. Smith

AN
ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BY

HON. MARSHALL CRAM,

AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE
TOWN HOUSE IN BRIDGTON,

JANUARY 8, 1852.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

PORTLAND:
BROWN THURSTON, PRINTER.
1852.

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GIFT OF
MISS ANNA BARROWS

OCT. 4, 1929

At the annual Town Meeting of the Town of Bridgton, held March 16, 1852,

VOTED, That NATHANIEL PEASE, RENSELLAER CRAM, and NATHANIEL S. LITTLEFIELD, be a Committee to procure the Printing of twelve hundred copies of the Address, delivered by Hon. Marshall Cram, on the 8th of January last, on the occasion of the Dedication of the Town House, erected in this town the past year, with an appendix, containing the proceedings of the meeting held in said House, on said occasion. — The expense of said printing to be paid out of the Town Treasury; and that said Committee be directed to deliver fifty copies of said publication to the author of said Address; and to cause to be delivered to the head of each family and every legal voter who is not the head of a family, in town, one copy of said publication; and that the remaining copies be disposed of as said Committee think proper, the proceeds of such remaining copies to be refunded to the Treasury

[Copy from the records.]

Attest:

SAMUEL ANDREWS, 2d, TOWN CLERK.

BRIDGTON, April 2, 1852.

SIR:

At the Annual Meeting of the Inhabitants of this town, held on the 16th ult., the undersigned were appointed a Committee to procure the Publication of the Address delivered by you, on the occasion of the Dedication of the new Town House, on the 8th day of January last. To enable us to perform the duty required of us, we respectfully request you to furnish us with a copy of said Address, with such marginal notes and references as you deem proper to elucidate the subject discussed.

Hon. Marshall Cram, Bridgton.

NATHANIEL PEASE,
RENSELLAER CRAM, } Com.
N. S. LITTLEFIELD. }

BRIDGTON, April 10, 1852.

GENTLEMEN:

Yours of the 2d inst. is received; and, agreeably to your request, I herewith forward to you a copy of the Address delivered by me at the new Town House in Bridgton, on the 8th of January last. I take this opportunity to say that I am under obligations to many of the citizens of Bridgton, and especially to Dr. Theodore Ingalls, for information relative to the history of the Town.

Respectfully Yours,

MARSHALL CRAM.

To Messrs. Nathaniel Pease, Rensselaer Cram, and N. S. Littlefield, Committee.

A D D R E S S .

CUSTOM has long since sanctioned the practice of meeting together, to notice with appropriate ceremonies the commencement and the completion of every important public work. Is there a railroad to be constructed ; the ground is first broken in the presence of a multitude ; and when completed, the first car that rattles over its iron track is greeted with the shouts of the assembled people. Is a monument to be erected in commemoration of some great event ; vast numbers assemble, to lay with ceremonies adapted to the occasion, the first corner stone ; and when the pile has reached its destined height, and received the last stone that crowns its apex, the people are again summoned to witness and to celebrate its completion.

Though, perhaps, of less importance, still of the same character is the occasion which has called together this assembly. The erection of this building, marks an era in the history of this town. The present is an occasion on which we may do well to pause, and lift the veil from past events ; — to mark the successive achievements of art, from the felling of the first tree and the erection of the first log cabin, to the completion of this noble structure ; — to trace the progress of improvement from the rude customs of a pioneer life, to the high degree of civilization and

refinement, which characterizes the society of the present time ; to study the history of the past, and draw thence lessons of instruction for the future.

Looking back but ninety short years — reverting to the period of 1761, we see here but one unbroken forest ; its peaceful lakes slumbering quietly beneath the shadows of the tall pines which line their borders ; their existence scarcely known to the white man, and their waters rippled only by the light canoe ; a moody silence resting over the whole scene, broken only by the stately tread of the Indian, or the wild howling of the beasts of prey. From the contemplation of this scene, we pass to a consideration of the changes which have been wrought by the hand of civilized man.

In the year 1736, Capt. John Tyler and fifty-six others, officers and soldiers in the “Canada Expedition in 1690,” obtained from the Legislature of Massachusetts, in consideration of military services rendered in that expedition, a grant* of a tract of land, six miles square, called Rowley Canada — which was then supposed to lie within the Province of Massachusetts ; but upon the establishment of the line, it was found that nearly the whole of that tract fell within the limits of New Hampshire ; consequently, the title derived from Massachusetts proved invalid.

To remedy this defect, in the year 1761, on the petition of Benjamin Mullikin, Moody Bridges, and Thomas Perley, agents for the proprietors, the Legislature of Massachusetts passed a Resolve, granting to the legal representatives or assigns of the original grantees, in lieu of the tract called Rowley Canada, a township of the contents of seven miles square, in the unappropriated land belonging to the Province of Massachusetts ; Provided that the grantees locate the said township to the eastward of Saco River, adjoining some other tract already located ; and return a plan thereof into the secretary’s office, within twelve

* The grant to John Tyler and others, was made February 3, 1736.

months, for confirmation; and, provided also, that within six years they settle thirty families in said township; build a house for public worship; settle a learned Protestant minister; and lay out one sixty-fourth part of the township for the use of the first settled minister; one other sixty-fourth part for the support of the ministry, and one other sixty-fourth part for the use of Harvard College.*

Pursuant to this grant, Messrs. Mullikin, Bridges and Perley proceeded to lay out a township on the easterly side of the Saco river, adjoining Col. Joseph Frye's township, then called Pickwockett, now the town of Fryeburg; extending nine miles in length, by six and a half miles in width; containing fifty-eight and a half square miles, or 37,440 acres; and presenting a plan of the same to the Legislature, they obtained a confirmation thereof, on the 25th day of June, 1765: but with the additional proviso, that instead of thirty families, they should be required to settle eighty-two families in the township, within the time specified in their grant.

Having obtained a confirmation of their grant, the proprietors employed Solomon Wood, of Boxford, Mass., to run out all that part of the township, lying west of Long Pond, into lots of half a mile in length, and one hundred rods in width, containing one

* Several of the original grantees settled on the tract called Rowley Canada, which now constitutes the town of Rindge, in Cheshire County, New Hampshire; and some of their descendants may be found among the present inhabitants of that town. The following are the names of the original grantees:

Capt. John Tyler,
Benjamin Mullikin.
James Bridges,
Nathan Symonds,
James Chandler,
James Stuart,
Samuel Goodridge,
Thomas Wood,
John Abbot,
Josiah Ingalls,
Joshua Jackson,
Samuel Dickinson,
William Bennett,
Joseph Nelson,
John Martin,
John Holmes,
William Knowlton,
James Bayley,
David Kimball,

Joseph Hidden,
Moses Burnam,
John Platts,
Nathaniel Jewett,
John Jewett, Jr.,
Benjamin Bellows,
Capt. Joshua Swan,
Joseph Hale,
Stephen Person,
William Martin,
Richard Perl,
Jonathan Crosbe,
Jonathan Jewett,
Nathaniel Fellows,
John Brocklebank,
James Platts, Jr.,
Thomas Carleton,
Benjamin Duch,
Anthony Dike,

Amos Pilebury,
Stephen Peabody,
Ezekiel Mighel,
Jeremiah Jewett,
Thomas Poor,
Samuel Austin,
Abraham Brown,
John Page,
Joseph Coffin,
Thomas Plumer,
Thomas Webster,
Aaron Dresser,
Ephraim Wetherby,
Elisha Davis,
Daniel Potter,
Moses Platts,
John Penny,
Ephraim Nelson,
Michael Hopkinson.

hundred acres each. Mr. Wood, with five assistants, named Stevens, Stacy, Adams, Parker, and Field, commenced this work on the eighth of September, and completed it on the sixteenth of October, 1766. He was accompanied by, and acted under the direction of, a committee of the proprietors: consisting of Moody Bridges, Richard Peabody, and Col. Thomas Poor. Several of the range lines were run by Mr. Bridges.

The township was held in eighty-six equal undivided parts, or shares, called rights. Sixty-one of these rights were held by individual proprietors; one right was set apart for the support of the ministry; one for the first settled minister; one for Harvard College; one for the support of schools; one for the first settler in the township; and the remaining twenty rights were held by all the proprietors as a community.

These rights were numbered from one to eighty-six; and the number of the right which each claimant should hold, was determined by lot. It was also determined in the same manner, what particular lots (generally three in number) should be assigned to each right. That part of the township lying on the easterly side of Long Pond, which now forms a part of the towns of Harrison and Naples, still remained undivided, and was held by all the proprietors in common.

After these preliminary arrangements, the first object of the proprietors was to clear away the forest; to introduce the arts of civilization, and to prepare here a suitable abode for man. As an encouragement to settlers, they proposed to give one hundred acres of the common land, lying east of Long Pond, to each settler, who should have twelve acres of land cleared, a house built, and a family settled in the township, by the year 1771.

In 1767, the proprietors gave their township the name of Bridgton, in honor of Moody Bridges, who was one of the proprietors and a son of James Bridges, one of the original grantees. Prior to this time, it had been known by the name of

Pondicherry, which was a name originally applied to a tract of country, lying between Long Pond on the east and Pleasant Mountain on the west, commencing a little south of the southerly line of Bridgton, and extending northerly, including the Hancock Ponds, Peabody Pond, Ingalls Pond, Holt's Pond, Adams Pond, Wood's Pond, Otter Pond, Beaver Pond, Moose Pond, Crotched Pond, Stearns' Pond, and the Keser Ponds. It received its name on account of the numerous ponds embraced within its limits, and the abundance of wild cherries which it produced. The proprietors, in making their location, commenced upon this tract, and for the time being applied its name to their township, although it extended eastward considerably beyond the limits of the tract originally known by that name. The name is of Indian origin, but it has probably been somewhat anglicized; and what similarity of sound there may have been between the original Indian term and the word Pondicherry, cannot now be ascertained.

In the same year, 1767, the proprietors cleared a road from Bridgton to Person Town, now Standish, passing through what was then called Flint's Town, and now constitutes the towns of Baldwin and Sebago. We shall err, however, if we regard this operation as any thing like the making of a road at the present time. It was merely clearing a track through the wilderness, sufficiently to pass through on horseback, or to drive their cattle through unyoked. Even as late as 1790, there was no road leading in that direction which was passable for any loaded wheel carriage. The only means of transporting articles of any considerable weight, or bulk, during the summer season, was by water, by the way of Sebago Pond, Songo River and Long Pond.

In 1768, the proprietors entered into an agreement with Capt. Benjamin Kimball, by which, in consideration of one right* of

* Right No. 61, consisted of lot No. 4, range 6, and lots Nos. 10 and 11, range 7, in the first Division, and No. 29, range 2, in the second Division. The present Village of North Bridgton, stands on lot No. 11, in the 7th range.

land, he bound himself to settle in the township by the tenth day of June of that year; to build a convenient house, for the entertainment of the proprietors and others, by the tenth day of September of the same year; to keep a store of goods, to be retailed out at a reasonable advance; and also to hold himself in readiness with a convenient boat of two tons burthen, rigged with a convenient sail, to convey passengers and freight from Person Town to the head of Long Pond; and from the head of Long Pond to Person Town, "back and forth," whenever called upon to do so by the proprietors, for the term of six years. For this service, he was to receive a compensation of six shillings per day for himself, five shillings per day for an assistant, and two shillings and sixpence per trip for his boat.

These conditions are embodied in the deed conveying to Capt. Kimball the sixty-first right of land; which was probably the first conveyance ever made by the proprietors. It bears date, "The Sixth Day of April, in the eighth Year of the Reign of Sovereign Lord George the third, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, &c., Annoque Domini one Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-eight."

The same year, 1768, they contracted with Mr. Jacob Stevens to build a saw-mill — to have it ready for operation in October of that year — to keep the same in repair for the term of fifteen years; and to saw lumber for the inhabitants at the halves; — also, to build a corn-mill — to keep the same in repair for the term of twenty years — to give suitable attendance, and to require no more than lawful toll. In consideration of which, he was to receive from the proprietors, one right and one lot* of land, a tax of three dollars upon each taxable right in the township, amounting to \$243; — also, five acres of land on the stream running from Crotched Pond to Long Pond, in the most suitable place for the erection of the mills; — also, the privilege

* Lot No. 8, range 15; also the 83d right, consisting of lots No. 10, range 9, No. 11, range 5, and No. 7, range 19, in the 1st Div., and No. 5, range 2, in the 2d Div.

of building a dam at the outlet of Crotched Pond, and the sole privilege of the stream, so long as he should be required to keep the mills, or either of them, in repair;—he paying them, in lawful money, the sum of £3.11.8.

These Mills were the first erected in Bridgton; and were built on the stream now known as Stevens' Brook. They were placed near the mouth of the stream, that they might be easy of access from the Pond; which, for want of roads, was then the principal thoroughfare for travel and transportation.

Owing to unforeseen obstacles, the settlement did not advance so rapidly as was anticipated; and in 1772, the proprietors extended the time within which the settlers might avail themselves of the right to a lot of land, to the last day of July, 1773; and modified the conditions so as to require a clearing of only six acres of land, instead of twelve. They also added a proviso, that, in case of the occurrence of an Indian war, the time should be still further extended. Again, in 1773, they gave a further extension till the 25th day of December, 1774, upon the same conditions.

In 1777,* the proprietors moved their records to Bridgton, and passed a vote that their meetings, which, prior to that time had been held at Andover and Boxford, in Massachusetts, should thereafter be held in Bridgton. At the same time, they appointed Enoch Perley, Proprietor's Clerk, who continued to perform the duties of that office till the year 1806, when, having disposed of all the property which they held in a corporate capacity, they, as an organized body, ceased to exist.

It may be necessary here to state that, from this time forward, the proprietors were nearly identical with the inhabitants; though the proprietors were not all inhabitants, yet nearly all the inhabitants were proprietors; and any public act of the proprie-

* Prior to 1777, the Proprietors' Records were kept at Andover, Mass., and Moody Bridges acted as Proprietors' Clerk.

tors, subsequent to the removal of the records to Bridgton, may be regarded as an act of the inhabitants of the place.

On the night of the 2d of October, 1780, the dwelling house of Enoch Perley was consumed by fire; * and all the records of the past proceedings of the proprietors were destroyed. — Fortunately, however, the Field-notes of the surveyor who laid out the township, and the tickets by which the lots were drawn, were preserved. From these, and from memory, a committee appointed for the purpose, made up a new record of the most important transactions; and procured a confirmation thereof, by the Legislature of Massachusetts, in 1783. Thus the loss was repaired so far as to secure the pecuniary rights and interests of the proprietors, and inhabitants of the town; but no doubt the knowledge of many facts in the history of the early settlers, which would be of interest at the present time, was lost, never to be recovered.

In June, 1782, a committee of the proprietors, appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the progress made by the settlers, in clearing land, erecting buildings, &c., reported that David Kneeland, William Emerson, Asael Foster, Richard Peabody, Stephen Gates, James Flint, David Clark and Timothy Gates, had so far fulfilled the requirements of the proprietors, as to merit one lot each; and that Benjamin Kimball and Jacob Stevens, merited two lots each. This report was accepted by the proprietors, and at a later period, they granted to Moody Bridges and Stephen Johnson one lot each, in consideration of their having made early settlements in the township — making fourteen lots, which the proprietors adjudged to have been merited,† and which, these individuals were permitted to locate adjoining the water, on the easterly side of Long Pond; and hence, the water

* The house burnt, was the second house built by Esq. Perley. The first is still standing on the old homestead, and is used as a tool shop. It is the house in which Gen. John Perley was born; and is believed to be the oldest building now standing in the town.

† The fourteen Merited Lots were run out by Benjamin Kimball, Jr., in 1793.

lots on that side of the Pond, numbered from one to fourteen, have since been designated as *merited* lots.

At the same time, June, 1782, arrangements were made for building a saw-mill, for the use of the inhabitants, on the stream leading from Wood's Pond to Long Pond. The mill was to be built at the public expense; and Robert Andrews, Enoch Perley, and Isaiah Ingalls, were appointed a Committee to superintend the building. The site selected for this mill,* was the same that is now occupied by Mr. Chaplin's mill, in the village known by the name of *Pinhook*.

The same year, the proprietors entered into a contract with Mr. Jesse Knapp, by which they agreed to give him fifty acres of land — "To build him the frame of a house, 17 feet wide and 30 long, one story high, and board the same, he finding nails — also a shop, sufficient for one forge, and board the same, he finding nails; and dig a cellar under one room of the house," in consideration of his settling in the township; and performing all the blacksmith work that might be wanted by the inhabitants for the term of seven years; — he receiving from the inhabitants reasonable pay for his work. The house and shop were erected† near the present site of the Willet house, now owned by Dr. Pease, and were occupied by Mr. Knapp, in the Fall of 1782.

In September, 1785, the public saw-mill, then nearly completed, was swept away by a freshet. It was rebuilt, however, and ready for operation in 1786. James Flint, Phineas Ingalls, and William Emerson, were appointed to take charge of the mill, and manage it as they should judge most for the public advantage. This arrangement, however, in its practical operation, seems not to have been satisfactory to the inhabitants; and in May, 1787, the mill was sold at public auction, to Mr. Javan Knapp, for the sum of fifty pounds — to be paid one half in cash, wheat, corn, rye, peas, white beans, or any kind of stock, at the market

* On Lot No. 5, range 18.

† On Lot No. 7, range 15.

price, and the other half in boards at 18 shillings per thousand, — the purchaser binding himself to saw lumber for the inhabitants, and to receive the same kinds of articles for pay.

Although, by the terms of their grant, the proprietors were required to settle a learned Protestant minister, within six years from its date; yet, down to this time, owing to a want of means for his support, they had not been able to comply with this requirement. They had, however, almost from the commencement of the settlement, employed a preacher some part of each year, generally from three to five or six months.*

In 1788, the proprietors agreed to unite with the Church, in settling the Rev. Nathan Church in the ministry, and proposed to give him the 2d right of land† which had been set apart for the first settled minister; — to give him £60, to be paid in labor or materials for building a house, within one year, and £15 in cash, to be paid within three months from the time of his settlement, and to pay him a salary of £45 for the first year, to be increased by the addition of £3 each year till it should amount to £75; and thereafter a permanent salary of £75 per year, during his continuance in the ministry in this place — to be paid one-fifth part in cash, and the remainder in beef, pork, corn, rye, or labor; he having the right to choose what articles he would take, but not to receive more than one-third part of the sum in any one article. They also proposed to furnish him with twenty-five cords of wood, annually, delivered at his door.

These proposals were accepted by Mr. Church, and he became the first settled minister in Bridgton, in the year 1789. Agreeably to this contract, he was supported by the proprietors till the town was incorporated, 1794, when, at the request of the proprietors, the inhabitants of the town voted to receive the Rev. Mr. Church as their minister; and to take upon themselves

* Rev. Mr. Everett and Rev. Mr. Thompson were the Preachers employed before the settlement of Mr. Church.

† The 2d Right consisted of lot 6, range 15, and lots 8 and 4, range 29, in the first Division, and lot No. 4, range 1, in the 2d Division.

the same obligations that the proprietors were then under, with regard to the payment of his annual salary.

In 1790, the proprietors voted to build a meeting house, and assessed a tax of three shillings and six pence on each taxable lot, to defray in part the expense of the building.* John Peabody, Daniel Brigham and Phineas Ingalls were appointed a building committee, and instructed to sell the ground for the pews to individuals, at not less than ten dollars for any one pew — the proceeds of the sales to be applied to the building of the house. The purchasers were required to build their own pews, which were to be built in uniform style. The house was built on one of the ministerial lots, No. 6, in the 15th range, and was first occupied, though unfinished, in October, 1791.

In 1792, the proprietors voted to add a porch to the front of the meeting house ; and to lay out ten acres of the ministerial land for a burying ground and training field. This ground was laid out adjoining the meeting-house, extending twenty rods north and south, and twenty-four rods east and west, from the centre of the house : that part of it lying on the easterly side of the house was used for the burying ground, and that on the westerly side for the training field.

These men may seem to have acted inconsistently, in thus appropriating a portion of the land which had been assigned for the support of the ministry ; but allowance should be made for the time when and the circumstances under which they acted. They had just passed through the bloody struggle, which resulted in the achievement of liberty and national independence. Many of them had worn their country's livery, and were fresh from the scenes of the camp and the battle field ; and it is not strange, that to men educated as they had been, it should seem perfectly consistent that the religion of the Prince of Peace should go hand in hand with the practice of the arts of war ; or, that the

* The meeting house was 35 feet wide and 45 feet long, and two stories high, with galleries.

means which had been set apart for the propagation of the one should thus serve to facilitate a preparation for the other. Subsequently, this action of the proprietors was in part reversed by the town — the burying ground was reduced to the size of two acres; and the training field, excepting a sufficient width for a road, was sold, together with the rest of the ministerial lands.

At a still later period, a part of the training field was re-purchased by the town, and still remains a common at the west end of the old meeting house. It was for many years the scene of much *truly patriotic* military display; and is closely associated with the military spirit of those early times. Even at this late day, as we pass that spot, we can almost hear the rattling of the drum, and the wild screaming of the fife; and we can *almost* see the military heroes of those times, at the head of their respective companies, wielding the sword and giving the word of command.

In 1793, that part of the township lying north* and east of Long Pond, was laid out by Benjamin Kimball, Jr., into ninety lots of about ninety acres each, and was called the Second Division. Four of the poorest of these lots were set aside as blank lots; and of the remaining eighty-six, one was drawn to the holder of each of the eighty-six different rights. For performing this service, Mr. Kimball received fifty acres of the land, which he selected at the outlet of Anonymous Pond — the site of the present village of Harrison.

Having thus noticed some of the events in the history of the plantation, from the commencement of its settlement down to

* That part of the township lying north of Long Pond, was first *lotted* by Mr. Wood, who, when he laid out the westerly part, extended the first five ranges of lots quite across to the easterly line of the town. Only three lots lying eastwardly of the lots numbered 11, in the first five ranges, had been disposed of by the proprietors at the time when Mr. Kimball laid out the easterly part of the town; and he *lotted over* all that part of those five ranges lying east of the lots numbered 11, except the three lots which had been disposed of, and included it in the Second Division.— This accounts, in some measure, for the irregular manner in which that part of the town is laid out.

the time of its incorporation as a town, let us turn back and inquire who and what were the men who first sought a home in this then inhospitable region—who led the way in subduing the wilderness, turning it into a fruitful field, and laying a foundation for the prosperity and happiness which we now enjoy.]

The first settlement in the township was made by Capt. Benjamin Kimball, who came from Ipswich, Mass., in the spring of 1768, and located at the head of Long Pond, on the site of the present village of North Bridgton. The cellar of his house, which stood at some distance from the Pond, may still be seen a few rods north-west from the three-story brick house built by Mr. Andrews. Mr. Kimball kept a public house, for the accommodation of the proprietors, immigrants, and such travelers as might chance to stray so far into the wilderness; and agreeably to his contract, he run a boat from the head of Long Pond to the foot of Sebago Pond, for the conveyance of freight and passengers. Mr. Kimball had been a sea captain, and was selected by the proprietors to occupy this position, partly with reference to his qualifications for navigating these ponds. He kept a store of goods, and for several years carried on considerable trade with the Indians; but, during the latter part of his life, he was prevented from pursuing any active business by a stroke of paralysis, which deprived him of the use of his limbs. He died in 1802, at the age of 68. Capt. Kimball was the father of Benjamin Kimball, Jr., who settled on the farm now owned by Simeon C. Walker, and became one of the prominent citizens of the town. He was a practical land surveyor, and *lotted out* that part of the town known as the Second Division.

The first male child born in Bridgton, was the son of an unmarried daughter of Capt. Kimball, who was born June 8th, 1772, and took the name of his reputed father, Moses Hale. He afterwards preferred a claim to one hundred acres of land, which the proprietors had proposed to give to the first male child that should be born in the town. His claim was several times

rejected, by vote of the proprietors, on account of his illegitimacy; but, finally, in 1793, they voted to give him a lot,* on condition that he should improve the same, either by himself or his assigns, for the term of ten years.

The second settler was Jacob Stevens, from Andover, Mass., who came to Bridgton in 1768, and settled near the mouth of Stevens' Brook,† where he and his sons built a camp and lived some nine years without any female associates—his wife being detained at Andover, on account of an aged mother. In 1777, his daughter Elizabeth, now the widow of Deacon Phineas Ingalls, then only thirteen years of age, came to Bridgton and kept her father's house. Mr. Stevens was the father of a numerous family, and many of his descendants may be found among the inhabitants of Bridgton at the present time. He died in November, 1802, at the age of 77. The farm on which Mr. Stevens first settled, is now owned and occupied by Nathaniel Martin, who married a grand-daughter of Mr. Stevens.

Stephen Gates, from Andover, came to Bridgton about the same time with Capt. Kimball. He was an active and enterprising man, and was very efficient in advancing the settlement of the place. He felled the first trees, and assisted Capt. Kimball in making the first clearing in the town, which was made at the head of Long Pond. He afterwards settled on the place where Ithamer Brigham now lives,‡ where he remained till about 1790, when he sold out to Capt. Jacob Hazen. He afterwards emigrated to Ohio.

Timothy Gates, brother to Stephen, who came to Bridgton about the same time, was a very different man.§ He was one of those men who are fitted only for the woods—loving a

* The Lot given to Moses Hale, was No. 13, in the 1st range—being the same on which Henry Carter now lives.

† On Lot No. 8, in the 15th range.

‡ Lot No. 9, range 7.

§ Timothy Gates occupied the lot now owned and occupied by George Woodbury, being No. 7, Range 16.

border residence for its privilege of hunting and fishing; and its freedom from all the formalities and restraints of civilized life. He served in the army of the Revolution, and was usually called serjeant Gates. After the war he remained in Bridgton till about 1795, when he removed to Ohio.

In 1769, David Kneeland from Topsfield, settled on the lot where Aaron Brigham now lives;* where he remained till 1787, when he sold out to Asa Kimball, and moved to Otisfield. Mr. Kimball built on this place a rope-walk some 300 feet in length, and carried on the business of manufacturing twine and cordage to considerable extent for several years. He also built a saw-mill, on Stevens' Brook, at the upper privilege, where Mr. Walker's mill now stands. This mill was built in 1788, at the expiration of the time for which the sole privilege of the stream was granted to Mr. Stevens.

David Clark, came from Topsfield in 1770; and commenced a clearing on the place where Ebenezer Carsley now lives.† At the commencement of the Revolution, he entered the army, and served through the whole of the revolutionary war; at the close of which he returned to his farm in Bridgton, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died in March, 1831, at the age of 83 years.

Enoch Stiles, from Andover, came to Bridgton in 1771, and settled on the place now owned and occupied by his son Davis Stiles, where he spent a long quiet and useful life. He died in 1831, at the age of 87. Noah Stiles a twin brother of Enoch came at the same time and settled where Joseph Brown now lives,‡ where he remained till about the year 1800, when he sold out and moved to Otisfield.

Early in 1772, William Emerson from Methuen, came to Bridgton, and first settled on the lot where Mial Merrill now

* Lot No. 9, range 5. On this lot were raised the first apples that were raised in Bridgton.

† Lot No. 9, Range 4.

‡ Enoch and Noah Stiles, both settled on one Lot, No. 9, Range 6.

lives;* but after about six years, he moved to the place now occupied by Jonathan Seavey, in the swamp neighborhood;† where he resided until his death. Mr. Emerson was by nature singularly fitted to aid in the settlement of a new country: he had a strong constitution, and great powers of endurance, cheerful spirits, and a kind heart. Probably no other individual by his own personal exertions did so much to relieve the hardships, and to promote the comfort of the early settlers, as Mr. Emerson. He was one of those men, who think the hardest is ever meant for them. If the little settlement was threatened with a famine, William Emerson was the man, if in winter, to rig his sapsled, or if in summer to shoulder his pack, and away to Standish or to Pickwockett, and procure the needed supply, or if a poor family had reached Standish, and needed the aid of a strong arm, and a bold spirit in crossing the extensive ponds, or in traversing the wilderness to the new settlement, Mr. Emerson was the ever ready volunteer for this arduous service; and having conducted his charge safely into the settlement, his aid and his efforts in their behalf ceased only when they were no longer needed. Mr. Emerson had the satisfaction of living to see the little settlement which in its infancy he had nourished, and kept alive at the expense of so much labor and hardship to himself, become a large and flourishing town. He died in 1827, at the age of 79.‡

The same year, 1772, Asael Foster came from Danvers, and first settled in the place which has since received the *fowl* name of *Hens-borough*.§ He built the first framed house in Bridgton, and his wife was the first married woman, that settled in the town. Their son Asael Foster 2d,|| was the first *legitimate* male

* Lot No. 6, Range 17.

† Lot No. 4, Range 16.

‡ Mr. Emerson had in all 13 children, 6 sons and 7 daughters. Many of his descendants still reside in Bridgton; but none of them bear the name of Emerson.

§ Lot No 4, Range 19.

|| Asael Foster 2d., was born Oct. 4 1773.

child born in Bridgton. He was the unsuccessful competitor of Moses Hale, for the premium of one hundred acres of land, which had been offered to the first male child that should be born in the town.* Mr. Foster found his location to be an unfavorable one, on account of the poverty and sterility of the soil, and after a few years of unsuccessful effort here, he removed to the south part of the town, and settled on the place now occupied by his two sons, Francis and Moody, where he spent the remainder of a long and useful life. He died in Feb., 1820, from the kick of a horse, at the age of 71.

In 1774, Reuben Burnham, from Bolton, Mass., settled on the place recently owned by Joshua Dennett, near the centre village.† Mr. Burnham, was the first deacon of the congregational church. He was killed in 1785, in the woods, a little distance north of the Willett house, by the fall of a tree.

The next year 1775, Simeon Burnham from Bolton, located on the west side of Crotched Pond, on the place where Richard Kimball now lives.‡ After several years he left Bridgton, and moved to Orland, in Hancock County. He was the father of Nathaniel and Simeon Burnham, now living in this town, and of Dr. John Burnham, of Orland.

About the same time, Stephen Johnson, from Andover, came into the place, and located on the easterly side of Wood's Pond, in what is now called the swamp neighborhood.§ Mr. Johnson was a famous hunter, and if his own stories might be believed, a very successful one, especially of the moose. According to his own reports, he was in the habit of catching the large moose, and riding them through the forest — using the strings of his snow-shoes or the bark of trees, for a bridle; but as he never succeeded in riding them into the settlement, his stories were

* Mr. Foster, had 5 sons, Joseph, Asael, Benjamin, Francis and Moody; and 6 daughters, Lucy, Mary, Joanna, Sarah, Rebecca and Mehitabel.

† Mr. Burnham settled on Lot No. 6, Range 12.

‡ Lot No. 6, Range 9.

§ On Lot No. 4, Range 15.

not always credited. The town soon became too populous to suit his taste, or to favor his pursuits; and after a few years he sold out and left the place.

Enoch Perley, from Boxford, Mass., came to Bridgton in 1776, and settled in the south part of the town, on the place now owned and occupied by his grandson, John P. Perley.* Esq. Perley, as he was almost invariably called, was a man of strong native intellect, ready tact, and uncommon sagacity. From the time of his first coming to Bridgton, he occupied a conspicuous position in the settlement. He held many of the most important offices in the town, and was for many years an acting magistrate; and became extensively known as a man of intelligence and superior business capacity. He was a strict utilitarian, — whatever his hand touched, was always turned to some practical account; and by extraordinary forecast and untiring industry, he accumulated a large estate. He was a man of active benevolence, and among other acts of liberality contributed thirty-three hundred and fifty five dollars towards establishing a permanent fund for the support of the ministry in this town. Mr. Perley died in 1829, at the age of 80.

In 1779, David Hale, from Templeton, Mass., settled in the south part of the town, on Lot No. 4, in the 22d Range, where he remained till his death, which occurred in 1831, at which time he was 82 years of age. His farm descended to and is now owned and occupied by his son David Hale,† who is the oldest man now living in Bridgton, that was born in the town.

Theodore Emerson, from Methuen, in 1779, settled in the swamp neighborhood, on the lot first occupied by Stephen Johnson, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died in 1832, at the age of 75.

* Enoch Perley, had 2 sons, John and Thomas, and three daughters, Rebecca, Nancy, and Huldah. John, better known as Gen. Perley, inherited the homestead, which he occupied till his death, in 1841. Thomas, known as Major Perley, settled in that part of Bridgton, now part of Naples, and resided there till his death, in 1842.

† David Hale, was born June 7, 1781.

The same year Isaiah Ingalls, from Andover, settled in the south part of the town, on the place where Royal Warren now lives.* Mr. Ingalls was a practical land surveyor; and for many years spent a large portion of his time in that employment. He was for many years an acting magistrate, was the first captain of the militia;† was the first town Clerk, and held many other important offices in the town. He died in 1830, at the age of 75 years.

Robert Andrews, from Boxford, came to Bridgton, in 1780, and located in the south part of the town, near Adams Pond,

* Mr. Ingalls located on lot No. 2, range 22. He had 5 sons and three daughters, all of whom have either deceased or left the town.

† The militia was first organized in 1792. Isaiah Ingalls was chosen Captain; Robert Andrews, Lieut., and John Killborn, Ensign. The following is a copy of the oath taken and subscribed by Lieut. Andrews and Ensign Killborn, to qualify them to enter upon the discharge of their official duties:

"I do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare, that the Common Wealth of Massachusetts is, and of Right ought to be, a free, sovereign and Independant State; and I do swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the said Common Wealth; and that I will defend the same against the Traitorous conspiracies and all Hostile attempts whatsoever; and that I do Renounce and abjure all Allegiance, Subjection and Obedience to the King, Queen or Government of Great Britain, (as the case may be) and Every other Foreign Power, whatsoever, and that no Foreign Prince, person, Prelate, State or potentate Hath or ought to Have any Jurisdiction, superiority, pre-eminence, authority Dispensing or other Power in any matters Civil, Ecclesiastical or Spiritual within this Common Wealth; Except the authority and Power which is or may be vested by their Constituents in the Congress of the United States; and I do further Testify and Declare that no Man or Body of Men, hath or can have any Right to absolve or Discharge me from the Obligation of this Oath, declaration or affirmation, and that I do make this acknowledgement, profession, Testimony, Declaration, denial, Renunciation and Abjuration, heartily and Truly according to the common meaning and acception of the foregoing words, without any equivocation Mental evasion or Secret Reservation whatsoever. So help me God."

Signed,

ROBERT ANDREWS,
JOHN KILBORN.

"I Robert Andrews, do solemnly swear and affirm, that I will Faithfully and Impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent on me as a Lieutenant, according to the best of my ability and understanding, agreeable to the Rules and Regulations of the Constitution and Laws of the Common Wealth. So help me God."

Signed,

ROBERT ANDREWS.

An oath of the same form as the last of those above quoted, was also taken and subscribed by Ensign Killborn.

where he built a small camp and commenced clearing a farm ; * for several years living entirely alone — doing his own cooking, &c. By persevering industry, he became a man of property, and was a prominent and worthy citizen of the town. Mr. Andrews was proverbially honest, and was ever kind and benevolent to the poor. He contributed two thousand dollars towards establishing a fund for the support of the ministry in the town ; and by his will he gave one thousand dollars, to establish a fund for the perpetual benefit of the honest and industrious poor, for which he will be held in grateful remembrance as long as there remains a class of this description of persons to share the benefit of his liberality. Lieut. Andrews,† as he was generally called, was a soldier of the Revolution ; and fought at the battle of Bunker Hill. He died in 1845, at the advanced age of 92.

The same year, 1780, Daniel Perley, from Boxford, settled on the place now owned and occupied by his son Daniel Perley the 2d. He was a quiet man, of a philosophical cast of mind, and possessed more than ordinary natural capacity. He occupied the farm on which he first settled, till the year 1835, when he died at the age of 82.‡

John Peabody, from Andover, came also in 1780, and located in the south part of the town, near Enoch Perley's.§ He was a man of sterling integrity, sound intellect, and quick and ready wit. He was for many years one of the principal citizens of the town ; and was one of the deacons of the first Congregational Church. His wife was a sister of Enoch Perley. They were considerably advanced in life, and had several children when they came to Bridgton, four of whom died of the throat distemper, in the short space of ten days, in the month of Sep-

* Mr. Andrews, built on lot No. 3, range 22. His farm consisted of that lot, and No. 4, range 23.

† Lieut. Andrews, was a bachelor. At his decease, his estate was divided by will, among a large circle of distant relatives.

‡ Mr. Perley built on lot No. 3, in the 21st range.

§ Mr. Peabody, settled on lot No. 2, range 24. He had 10 children, 7 sons and 3 daughters, only 2 of whom are now living, viz : Huldah, widow of Daniel Perley, and Augustus, counselor at law, in Boston.

tember, 1785. Mr. Peabody cleared and cultivated a good farm, which descended to his son, Deacon John Peabody the 2d; and was occupied by him till his decease in May, 1838, when it descended to and is now owned by his son, Deacon Israel P. Peabody. Deacon John Peabody the 1st, died in 1820, at the age of 88.

Nathaniel Hale, brother of David Hale, came to Bridgton in 1781, and settled on the farm where his son Nathaniel now lives.* He was an industrious and frugal man, but was feeble in health, in which respect he was less fortunate than his neighbors; who in general were remarkable for health and vigor. He died in 1831, at the age of 76.

Phineas Ingalls, who came from Andover, in 1781,† and settled where Capt. Asa Ingalls now lives, was one of the most prominent among the early settlers. He was popular with his fellow citizens; and, from the time of his settling in Bridgton, till past the age of 70, he was more in public office, than any other citizen of the town. He was the first Town Treasurer, was for many years chairman of the board of Selectmen, was the first Representative of the town in the Legislature of Mass., was a member of the Convention for framing the Constitution of this State, was a member of the first Legislature of Maine, and was a member of the first Court of Sessions; which last office he held until removed by age. He was also a Deacon of the first Congregational Church. He served in the army of the Revolution, and drew a pension of \$144, per year. At his decease he left a handsome property; his homestead, consisting of about four hundred acres, is one of the best farms in the town. He died in Jan. 1844, at the age of 86.‡ It is worthy of remark,

* Mr. Hale built on lot No. 2, range 21.

† Phineas Ingalls settled on lot No. 1, in the 22d range.

‡ He had 4 sons and 6 daughters. His first son Aaron, resides in Denmark; the 2d Asa, who occupied the homestead, has died since this address was written; the 3d Theodore, a physician, resides in Portland; the 4th Phineas, also a physician, resides in Standish.

that nearly all the early settlers of Bridgton, lived to an advanced age.

James Flint, from Reading, in Massachusetts, was also among the pioneers of the settlement; but the precise time of his coming to Bridgton, I have not been able to ascertain: it was, however, prior to the year 1780.* He first located on the west side of Crotched Pond,† on the place where William Bennett now lives, but after a few years he moved to the east side of the pond, and settled on the farm now owned and occupied by Nathan Hilton; where he remained till the time of his death, July 4th, 1808.

These were some of the first — others soon followed (whom time will not permit us to notice individually) who were men of equal worth; and whose aid was equally important in subduing the wilderness, and promoting the prosperity and improvement of the town. ‡

For several years the progress of the settlement was much retarded by the Revolutionary war; though not actually molested, yet the inhabitants were in constant apprehension of a hostile attack by the Indians. Several of the families *broke up*, and removed to Standish, where they remained till the danger was past. At one time, in consequence of information being received that the Indians had attacked the settlement at Bethel,§ and

* Since this address was written, it has been ascertained that Mr. Flint came to Bridgton, about 1774 or 5. † On lot No. 8, range 6.

‡ The following names may be mentioned as among the principal men who settled in Bridgton, between the year 1781, and the time of the incorporation of the town, 1794: John Davenport, Ebenezer Carsley, Ezra Gould, Aaron Beeman, Jedediah Kimball, Reuben Ingalls, Jacob Hazen, Abner Dodge, Nathan Dodge, William Bennett, Theodore Gibbs, Alpheus Gibbs, Daniel Brigham, Michael Webb, William Sears, Samuel Davis, Jonathan Smith, William Morrison, Dudley Perkins, Israel Green, William Woodbury, John Killborn, Joseph Brocklebank, George Mead, John Chaplin, Asa Barker, Daniel Barnard, Nathan Ingalls, Francis Ingalls and Asa Ingalls. The three last named were brothers of Isaiah and Phineas Ingalls, and settled in the same neighborhood. In the winter of 1806 and 7, there were twenty-seven scholars attending school in district No. 1, bearing the name of Ingalls — all of one generation — brothers, sisters and cousins.

§ Bethel was then called Sudbury Canada.

killed one man, and were advancing towards Bridgton, the alarm became so great, that nearly all the inhabitants determined on evacuating the place. They had prepared to depart by the next boat, when they were relieved from apprehension by the intelligence that the enemy had faced about, and were returning towards Canada. From the close of the war in 1783, the settlement advanced more rapidly, and in 1787, the population consisted of thirty-nine families, numbering two hundred and fifteen persons.

The most important location in the town, (or what has since become the most important) was selected by William Sears, from Beverly, Mass., about the year 1789. Mr. Sears had been a sea-captain, and had some property when he came to Bridgton. He purchased the lots No's. 6 and 7, in the 13th range, including a large portion of the valuable water power on Stevens' Brook. No. 6, he gave to his daughter Elizabeth, who was married to Abner Dodge. A small improvement had been made on No. 7, and a saw-mill built near the outlet of Crotched Pond, by Asa Kimball. Capt. Sears purchased this mill with the lot, and erected a grist-mill just below it, which he tended himself, till near the time of his death. He also built on the same lot, a large and well finished house, which was kept as a tavern, being the first tavern in the town, except that kept by Mr. Kimball, at the head of Long Pond. The house is still in good repair, owned by Richard Gage, and kept as a tavern by Ebenezer Cram. Capt. Sears had but one son, Joseph, who was an intelligent and well educated man ; but inherited little of his father's capacity for business. In a few years after his father's death, the property passed into the hands of Billy Emerson, of Topsfield, and was sold by him to Richard Gage. Prior to the sale to Gage, a number of building lots, and several privileges on the stream, had been sold off to different individuals. The lot (No. 7,) is now nearly all cut up into small village lots ; and covered with buildings, and nearly all

the water power on the stream, is now occupied by mills, and various kinds of manufacturing establishments.

The year 1789, was distinguished by the settlement of the first minister, Rev. Nathan Church, who was a native of South Hadley, and received his education at Dartmouth College.* He came to Bridgton in 1788; and was ordained pastor of the first Congregational Church, on the 17th of June, 1789.† Mr. Church, though not a fluent speaker, was regarded as a sound and learned divine. He was a kind, sympathising and benevolent man, and was much esteemed and respected by the people of his charge. According to the custom of the times, he was settled for life, or at least during good behavior. He continued in the ministry till the year 1827, when on account of age and infirmity, he retired and was succeeded by Rev. Daniel Newell.‡ Mr. Church died in Nov. 1836, at the age of 82.

At the taking of the first census by the General Government, in 1790, the plantation contained a population of 329.—This year was marked by the arrival of the first physician in the place, Dr. Samuel Farnsworth, who settled on the farm now owned

* Mr. C's. house stood on lot No. 6, range 14, where Augustus Perley's now stands.

† He had one son, Nathan, who now lives at Naples, and four daughters, only one of whom, Miranda, is now living.

‡ The pastors of the first Congregational Church have been, Rev. Nathan Church, from 1789 to 1827; Rev. Daniel Newell, from 1827 to 1880; Rev. Caleb F. Page, from 1884 to 1880; and Rev. Josiah T. Hawes, who was installed in Feb., 1881, and is the present pastor.

The Congregational Church at South Bridgton, has had but one pastor, Rev. Joseph P. Fessenden, who has preached to that people from the organization of the Church, in 1829, to the present time.

The Congregational Church at North Bridgton, has had as pastors Rev. Charles Soule, from 1833 to 1835; Rev. Joseph Searle, from 1837 to 1840; and Rev. L. W. Harris, from 1842, to the present time.

The pastors of the Baptist Church, "Have been, Reuben Ball, from 1812, about fourteen years; John Haynes, from 1827, one year; William Wyman, from 1828, three years; Reuben Milner, from 1832, one year; William O. Grant, from 1834, two years; L. L. Jordan, from 1836, one year; Jacob Bray, from 1837, four years; Leander H. Tripp, from 1841, one year; and A. B. Pendleton, from 1849, to the present time."

and occupied by George Dodge.* Dr. Farnsworth† was a native of Groton, Mass. His professional education was quite limited, but his good judgment, and quick perception, supplied in a good degree this deficiency. He did an extensive business; and became eminent in his profession, especially as a surgeon. As a citizen, he was active and public-spirited; and was always foremost in whatever tended to the improvement of society, and the promotion of the best interests of the community in which he lived. He died, much lamented, in 1817, at the age of 50. ‡

At the time of the incorporation of the town (in 1794) the population consisted of eighty-eight families, numbering 471 inhabitants. Few towns have been so fortunate in the character

* On lot No. 6, range 16.

† Dr. Farnsworth had a large family of children, only 2 of whom are now living, viz: Caroline wife of George Pierce, and Sybel Ann, wife of Solomon Andrews.

‡ Dr. Samuel Farnsworth, 2d., a native of Bridgton, son of Dr. Farnsworth the first, located at North Bridgton in 1816, where he remained till his decease, in 1842 with the exception of a few years, during which he resided in Portland. He was a well educated, and a skillful physician; and though his attention was directed partially to other pursuits, he continued to practice to some extent, till near the time of his death.—Dr. Theodore Ingalls, also a native of Bridgton, son of Phineas Ingalls, located at his father's in South Bridgton, in March, 1817. In November of the same year, on the death of Dr. Farnsworth, he moved to Bridgton Centre, where he did an extensive professional business, till the year 1829, when he retired from general practice, and for a number of years directed his attention mostly to other pursuits. In 1848, he removed to Portland, where he has resumed the practice of medicine.—In 1818, Dr. Jona. Fessenden, from Fryeburg, located as a physician at So. Bridgton, where he still resides. He did a good professional business till 1839, since which time he has been unable to practice, on account of ill health.—Dr. Moses Gould, a native of Bridgton, son of Ezra Gould, located as a physician at North Bridgton, in 1827, and still resides in that village; but for several years he has given but little attention to professional pursuits, and has now mostly retired from practice.—Dr. Nathaniel Pease, from Parsonsfield, came to Bridgton Centre, in 1828, since which time, with the exception of a few years, he has given his attention mostly to his profession; and when in practice, he has always had his full share of the business of the place.—Dr. Thomas F. Perley, a native of Bridgton, son of Thomas Perley, and grand-son of Enoch Perley, commenced practice at Bridgton Centre, in 1841, and did an extensive professional business till the latter part of the year 1851; when he left Bridgton, and was succeeded by Dr. Josiah M. Blake. Several other physicians have at different times located in Bridgton; but none of them have practiced to any considerable extent, and few of them have remained long in the town.

of their early settlers as this. The first inhabitants of Bridgton were extraordinary men — unlike the usual pioneers who go into the woods but to prepare the way for a better class ; and as civilization advances retire still farther into the forest, and still lead a border life — THEY came here to establish for themselves a HOME ; and to provide for the physical, intellectual and religious wants of the community, that should spring up around them : hence as the forest disappeared before their strong arms, the comfortable dwelling, the school house, and the church, rose in its place. They were generally intelligent, moral and religious ; and possessing great powers of endurance, they were peculiarly qualified to lead the way in a new settlement. They were a set of men who for firmness of nerve, energy of action and perseverance in overcoming the obstacles to be encountered in the settlement of a new country, have seldom been equalled, and perhaps never surpassed. Such they were — but they are gone. Let the grave cover their faults, but let a grateful posterity ever cherish their memory ; and by imitating their virtuous deeds, prove themselves not the unworthy descendants of such an ancestry.

Bridgton was incorporated as a town, Feb. 7th, 1794. The first town-meeting was held on the 18th of March, of the same year. Enoch Perley, was chosen Moderator ; Isaiah Ingalls, Town Clerk ; Phineas Ingalls, Treasurer ; Robert Andrews, James Flint and Joseph Sears, Selectmen ; Samuel Farnsworth, Enoch Perley and Joseph Sears, School-Committee ; Samuel Kimball, Ephraim Jewett and David Hale, Field-Drivers ; James Flint, Samuel Farnsworth and David Hale, Tything-men ; William Oliver and Timothy Gates, Deer-reeves ; and Reuben Ingalls Samuel Davis and Asael Foster, Hog-reeves. For that year the town raised the sum of £100, for the repair of highways ; £30, to defray town charges, and £18, for the support of Schools. The town was then divided into four School Dis

tricts, designated as the Northerly, the Westerly, the Middle and the Southerly Districts.

In April, 1797, the town received from the proprietors, the public meeting-house, then in an unfinished state; and contracted with Dr. Samuel Farnsworth and Joseph Sears, to finish the building by the first of January, 1798. Pursuant to this contract the house was finished, and served the two-fold purpose of a Church and Town-house, till the erection of a new church by the First Parish, in 1834; and, though much dilapidated, it continued to be used as a Town-house till the spring of 1851 — sixty-one years from the time when it was built. The old house is still standing, somewhat shattered, yet venerable on account of the sacred purpose to which it was dedicated, and the associations which cluster around it. As we pass by it, the mind involuntarily reverts to the time of its erection, and we call up in review a long line of those worthy men who laid its foundation, and worshipped there the God who had protected and sustained them through all the dangers, hardships and privations, incident to the settlement of a new town.

In March, 1851, the old house being deemed no longer fit for public use, arrangements were made for building a new Town-house to supply its place. Moses Gould, John Kilborn, Luke Brown, Horace Billings, William T. Kilborn, Rensellaer Cram and John P. Perley, were chosen a committee to contract with some suitable person or persons for building the house; and to superintend the work. The contract for the wood-work of the building, was taken by Benjamin Walker and William T. Kilborn; that for the stone-work, by Samuel Riggs and Edward R. Morse. Of the manner in which the committee and the builders have discharged the duties respectively devolving on them, it is not necessary for me to speak. Their work is before us, it may speak for itself. A single glance is sufficient to show its convenience, and perfect adaptation to the uses for which it is intended.

The purposes for which this building has been erected, and to which it is now dedicated, are of the highest importance. In a government like ours, all power is theoretically vested in the people, and is primarily exercised at the ballot-box. That the theory of our government may be carried fully into practice, it is essential, not only that the right of suffrage be general or universal, but also that its exercise be FREE; that when the citizen deposits his vote, it shall convey the expression of his own free will. The ballot is the lever that moves the whole machinery of our government; and upon a judicious exercise of this power, depends the continuance of our liberties, and the perpetuity of our free institutions. To secure an intelligent exercise of this power, which, by the constitution of our country, has been wisely placed in their hands; let the people be enlightened,—let them be instructed in the principles and practical operations of our government,—let them understand the potency of the instrument which they wield; and the responsibility of the trust with which they are invested; and when hereafter the citizens of this town shall assemble within these walls for the transaction of public business, as they deposit their ballots at this desk, let them act with that intelligence which foresees, not merely the direct, but even the remote results arising from their action; and let the measures which from time to time they shall here adopt be characterized by justice, impartiality, and a due regard for the general good.

From the time of its incorporation, the town steadily increased in wealth and population till 1805, when that part of her territory lying on the easterly side of Long Pond, containing about 8500 acres, was taken off to form in part the new town of Harrison. Again in 1834, a portion of the southeast corner of the town, containing about 2500 acres, with some of the best citizens, was taken off to form a part of the new town of Naples.* Thus robbed of her just proportions on the south and on the

* The present area of the town is about 30,000 acres, or about 47 square miles.

east, in 1847, taking a hint from the general government, she stretched out towards the west; and by annexation, acquired from the towns of Fryeburg and Denmark, a tract of territory containing about 3700 acres, now known by the name of TEXAS.

The population in 1790, was 329; in 1800, 646; in 1810, 882; in 1820, 1166; in 1830, 1451; in 1840, 1987, and in 1850, 2710; showing that the town has advanced from the smallest beginning, to its present condition, by a steady and healthy growth. At this time it contains about 2800 inhabitants, 530 legal voters, 1150 scholars between the ages of four and twenty-one years.

The provision made for the education of children and youth, consists of twenty-one public schools, in operation on an average about one half the time; and supported (in 1851) at an expense of \$1709,48,* and also an Academy, established in 1808,† now in a flourishing condition, employing three permanent teachers, and giving instruction during the last year to 345 students. There are also private schools kept in different parts of the town, a considerable part of each year.

The religious associations are, first a Congregational Church, at Bridgton Centre, which was organized in 1784, and consisted at its formation of seventeen members—ten males, and seven females; second, a Baptist Church formed in 1807, consisting at the time of its organization, of eight members—four males,

* Of this amount, \$1500 was raised by the town, \$65 was derived from interest of the town school-fund and \$144,28, from the State school-fund and the Bank tax.

The School lands consisting of lot No. 10, range 4, lots No. 5 and 6, range 3 in the first Division, and lot No. 8, range 4 in the second Division, were sold June 18, 1798, for the sum of \$1027,33, which was invested as a fund for the support of schools. The present amount of the school-fund is \$1028,32.

†This Academy was incorporated March 8, 1808, by the Legislature of Massachusetts; and received a grant of one half township of land, now the town of Maxfield, in the county of Penobscot. A portion of this land has been sold, and the proceeds invested in notes, and other securities. The present amount of the funds of the Institution is about \$8500. The school was kept till 1827, in the Masonic Hall, owned by Mr. Samuel Andrews. The present Academy building was erected in 1825, and first occupied in 1827.

and four females; third, a Congregational Church, at South Bridgton, which was organized in 1829; fourth, a Free Will Baptist Church, formed in 1830, the members of which reside in different parts of the town, but have their place of public worship at Pinhook; fifth, a Congregational Church, at North Bridgton, which was established in 1832; sixth, a Universalist Church, at Bridgton Centre, organized in 1840; there is also a very respectable number of Methodists, but they have no organized society within the limits of this town.*

The public buildings are, the Baptist meeting-house, at the Centre, built in 1815, and enlarged and furnished with a bell, in 1830; the Academy at North Bridgton, built in 1825, and enlarged in 1849; the Congregational meeting-house, at South Bridgton, built in 1826; the Congregational meeting-house, at North Bridgton; the Congregational meeting-house at Bridgton Centre, and the Free Will Baptist meeting-house, at Pinhook; all built in 1834; the Universalist meeting-house, at the Centre, built in 1839; and the Town-house, in which we are now assembled, built in 1851.

The town at this time contains two Taverns, eight Dry-goods and Grocery Stores, two Stove and Tin-plate Stores, nine Saw-mills, six Grist mills, three extensive Tanneries, two large Carriage manufactories, several other manufacturing establishments of considerable importance; an ample supply of mechanics of

* The Congregational Society at Bridgton Centre, has a fund of \$2800, the interest of which is expended for the support of the ministry. One thousand dollars of this sum was a donation from Lieut. Robt. Andrews, and the remainder arose from the sale of the ministerial lands, consisting of lots No. 6, range 15, No. 1, range 28, No. 1, range 29 in the first Division, and No. 23, range 1, in the second Division, which were sold April 29, 1799.

There is also a fund in the hands of Trustees, amounting to \$5000, the interest of which is applied to the support of a Preacher at South Bridgton. \$3355 of this fund, was contributed by Enoch Perley, Esq., one thousand dollars by Lieut. Robert Andrews, and the remaining six hundred and forty-five dollars, by Thos. Perley, Esq., of Boxford, Mass., who was one of the proprietors of this town.

In the other religious societies, the ministry is supported altogether by the voluntary contributions of individuals.

the various trades required by the wants of the community, and personal and real estate valued (by the Assessors) in 1851, at \$563,027.

And the question naturally arises — Whence comes this prosperity ? No doubt it may be attributed to the character and enterprise of the present inhabitants ; but what influences have operated to form that character, and to stimulate that enterprise ? As the present prosperous condition of New England is ascribed to the character of the Pilgrim Fathers, and to the results growing out of the institutions which they established ; so may the germ of the present prosperity of this town, be found in the character of its early inhabitants, in their examples of industry and economy, and the principles of morality and religion which they inculcated — what we now enjoy, is but the ripe growth of the seed which they scattered ; and we may hope for a continuance of this prosperity, only by imitating the virtues of those who have gone before us, by fostering the institutions of learning and religion, disseminating knowledge, promoting temperance and morality in the community ; and cultivating and developing the physical resources which a kind Providence has placed within our reach. May the present generation make a wise improvement of the rich inheritance they have received from their fathers ; and transmit it unimpaired to posterity ; and may Bridgton, henceforward hold that high rank among her sister towns, which the present enterprise of her citizens promises, and which a full development of her resources cannot fail to secure.

APPENDIX.

A List of the Inhabitants of Bridgton, taken by Enoch Perley, December 31, 1787.

Heads of the Families.—The ages of the males.—The ages of the females.

Andrews Robert,	35					45	4			
Burnham Simeon,	48	18	16	13		43	8	3	1	
Burnham Jeremiah,	28	1				21	2			
Beeman Noah,	28	25	5	3		30	4	1		
Davenport John,	54	26	24			55				
Clark David,	39									
Emerson William,	39	18	16	14	12	36	10	5	2	
Emerson Theodore,	30	19	1			36	4	2		
Foster Asael,	38	14	12	3	1	39	12	10	6	
Flint James,	38									
Gates Stephen,	44	14	10	8		43	15	5	3	
Gates Timothy,	40	9	4	2		35	1			
Hale David,	38	6	1			38	7			
Hale Nathaniel,	32	7				31	5	2		
How Moses,	33	6	1			33	8			
Ingalls Isaiah,	32	3	1			26	6			
Ingalls Phineas,	29	3	1			23				
Johnson Stephen,	41	9	1			39	17	7	6	4
Kimball Samuel,	27	14				27	4	1		
Kimball Richard,	24	1				20	3			
Kimball Benjamin,	53	15				50	29	9		
Kimball Benj. Jr.,	31	1				30	4	3		
Knapp Jesse,	60	23	16			50	19			

Kimball Asa,	49	20	17	15	13			49	11	9
Mead George,	39	13	9					39	2	
Oliver William,	44	14						60		
Peabody John,	55	21	19	17	8	6	1	46	23	
Porter David,	38	14	1					35	15	6
Porter David, Jr.,	25	3	1					22		
Perley Daniel,	34							26	1	
Perley Enoch,	38	17	9	4				34	20	9 1
Stiles Enoch,	42							32		
Stiles Noah,	42	15	8					85	4	
Stiles Ezra,	37							23	4	1
Stevens Jacob,	62	9						18	16	14
Stevens Jacob, Jr.,	32	33						28	1	
Stevens James,	38	13	1					31	10	5
Symonds Thomas,	26	25						26	1	
Jewett Ephraim,	39	14	12					34	15	13 9 7 1

WITHOUT FAMILIES.

Kneeland Abraham,	23
Burnham Abraham,	22
Burnham Nathaniel,	18
Burnham William,	75
Burnham E.,	25
Foster F.,	18
Kneeland S.,	20
Masters widow,	

*List of the Inhabitants of Bridgton, taken at the
time of the incorporation of the town (1794) by Dr.
Samuel Farnsworth.*

No. of Families.	No. of			No. of	
	males.	females.		Males.	females.
Ingalls,	1	3	Jacob Stevens, Jr.,	5	4
cis Ingalls,	3	3	David Clark,	2	3
l Hale,	3	4	Samuel Ingalls,	5	2
rt Andrews,	3	1	Abner Davenport,	3	2
el Perley,	3	4	Enoch Stiles,	2	5
el Barnard,	2	3	Jed'h & Jacob Kimball,	2	1
an Ingalls,	5	3	Noah Stiles,	4	3
aniel Hale,	3	6	Stephen Gates,	6	3
Barker,	7	4	Daniel Brigham,	3	2
an Smith,	1	1	Alpheus Gibbs,	3	2
Peabody,	7	3	James Webb,	4	3
Peabody, Jr.,	2	1	Theodore Gibbs,	2	2
l Perley,	6	4*	Ezra Gibbs,	4	1
Foster,	5	5	Ezra Gould,	3	2
am Daniels,	2	2	Aaron Beeman,	2	4
Chaplin,	9	1	Rufus Carter,	1	
ge Mead,	2	2	Benjamin Kimball,	4	3
Ingalls,	5	3	John Davenport,	1	1
as Ingalls,	4	3	Samuel Kimball,	1	5
min Sanborn,	1		Eliphalet Watson,	2	3
Hale,	1		James Watson,	2	4
l Kneeland,	2	2	John Carsley,	2	2
Flint,	4	3	Ebenezer Carsley,	1	1
am Bennett,	2	1	Reuben Ingalls,	1	
Smith,	2	2	Elias Whitney,	3	3
el Webb,	3	3	Nathaniel Jacobs,	2	2
Potter,	2	2	Dudley Perkins,	1	1
Johnson,	2	4	Israel Green,	4	5
Bradstreet,	2	1	Javan Knapp,	1	4
n Dodge,	2	3	Rev. Nathan Church,	3	4

Joshua Whitney,	2	5	Jesse Knapp,	1	2
William Sears,	3	3	Joash Knapp,	2	1
Abner Dodge,	6	4	Jas. Stevens & father,	6	4
Samuel Davis,	1	2	William Woodbury,	5	2
Jonathan Smith,	3	2	John Sanborn,	1	1
Abraham Kneeland,	3	1	John Kilborn,	6	3
Nathaniel Burnham,	1	1	Joseph Brocklebank,	3	2
Simeon Burnham,	4	4	Samuel Farnsworth,	3	2
David Porter,	3	3	Widow Burnham,		2
Jacob Hazen,	1		William Emerson,	4	7
Israel Kimball,	2	1	James Emerson,	1	2
William Hazen,	1	1	Theodore Emerson,	4	3
William Morrison,	4	7	Widow Masters,		1
William Oliver,	1	1		—	—
William Oliver, Jr.,	2	1	Total, . . .	248	223

* 1 Black.

The following is a "Summary of the valuation of the Lands and Dwelling Houses," in Bridgton, taken "pursuant to an Act of the United States, passed on the ninth day of July, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-Eight, entitled "An Act to provide for the Valuation of Lands and Dwelling Houses, and the Enumeration of Slaves, within the United States," by Enoch Perley, Esq., "Assistant Assessor in the Seventh Assessment District, in the Second Division of the State of Massachusetts." *

Houses.	Value.	Acres of Land exempted.	Acres of Land valued.	Value in Dolls.
3	210		690	2952
2	100		2555	4098
7	420		1972	8879
6	285		1895	6299
8	280		2760	6412
3	180		2039	8366
3	190	200	3160	6859
6	280		5370	6201
2	110		444	2124
5	185		4402	7872
1	10	90	4978	8005
3	140	300	2582	3504
4	270		756	4400
53	2660	590	33,603	75,971
Houses valued at more than \$100 each, 31,				6267
Total,				\$82,238

* Mr. Perley's commission was dated Nov, 7, 1798 — and this valuation is supposed to have been taken in 1799.

Proceedings of the meeting held on the 8th day of January, 1852, at the new Town House in Bridgton, for the dedication of said House.

The meeting was called to order by Doct. Moses Gould, Chairman, of the Building Committee. The house was nearly filled with inhabitants of the town, with some persons from other towns. Nearly one half of the audience were ladies.

A numerous band of singers were assembled in the gallery. Several musical instruments were at hand.

Music by the Choir—*America*.

On motion by Dr. Gould, NATHANIEL S. LITTLEFIELD, was chosen President of the meeting, who, on assuming the chair, briefly stated the objects of the meeting, as follows :

Friends and Fellow Citizens,—and lest I should be suspected of being wanting in gallantry, I will also say,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—The occasion which has brought us together is an interesting one, and I sensibly feel the compliment paid me by being selected by the committee, with the sanction of the audience, to preside over the meeting. If I do not perform the duties devolving on me as well as may be expected, I will do as well as I can, asking you to cast the mantle of charity over all imperfections and errors.

Our meeting was intended to have been held on the first day of the new year, that day being deemed appropriate to the occasion. In consequence of the severity of the weather, a postponement took place, 'till this day. And without any calculation on the part of those who advised to postpone till to-day, (as far as I know) we happen to meet on the anniversary of one of the most glorious days in the history of our country. On the 8th of January, 1815, Thirty-seven years ago to-day, the Battle of New Orleans was fought the result of which led to the close of the last war with Great Britain. On that day, the British Lion was so severely whipped by the American Eagle, that all doubt of the ability of the United

States to maintain their rights against the assaults of the British Nation were removed, and led to the honorable peace which immediately followed. Perhaps no day except the 4th of July, is so worthy of celebration by the American people, as the 8th of January.

The object of our assembling to-day, is to dedicate to the uses for which it is intended, the substantial, commodious and beautiful building, which now shelters us. The committee who have superintended its erection, having, as I believe, faithfully performed their duty, having accepted the House from the hands of the contractors, who I also believe, have faithfully performed their contract, have called us together on this interesting day, for the purpose of its dedication. The practice of dedicating public buildings, was formerly confined exclusively to those intended for Religious worship ; but latterly has been extended to those intended for other public uses. It is a good practice, and I should be glad to see it still further extended. The good old fashion of house-warmings, so common in the early days of our fathers and mothers, but now so generally fallen into disuse, I should be glad to see revived.

You will, I know, pardon me for alluding to the fact, that the inhabitants of the town were not unanimous on the question of building this House. No one denied but that we needed a town House ; but many good men thought that we could get along a few years longer with the old one.

If we wear out our boots and coats, as near as we wore out that old town house, I do not think we shall be accused of prodigality if we then throw them away. I revere the old house, and should be willing to say, "peace to its ashes."

A respectable majority was found to be in favor of the erection of the new house, and I have no doubt, but that those who opposed it, when we come to occupy it, and compare the comfort of doing business here, to that in the old house, will be glad it has been erected. Our records are now safe, and our town officers have now comfortable rooms in which to transact the town business — and in March next, those who assemble here, will see and feel how comfortable it will be to have our town meeting in a spacious, commo-

dious and well warmed room. We have reason to be proud of this House. I do not know of another so good in the whole State. Our town stands high among her sister towns in the State, in point of respectability, wealth and enterprise. No Bridgton man, need hesitate to say where he belongs. He may disgrace his town, but his town will not disgrace him. I am always proud wherever I go, to put "Bridgton" against my name, as my place of residence, and to say, I hail from there. In addition to all the advantages I have heretofore claimed for Bridgton, I intend hereafter to claim, that we have the best town House in the State.

The fear of trespassing on the ground assigned to another, and which I doubt not will be well occupied, will prevent a further extension of remarks from me on this occasion. Permit me only to add, that we all meet to-day on common ground, in our own house, under our own vine and fig-tree, all with equal rights. We throw aside for this day at least, all our differences of opinion, on political, religious and all other subjects, on which we chance to differ. All the jarring elements of discord are hushed to quiet and repose. We meet as citizens of the town of Bridgton, without distinction of sect or party, all interested for the common good, and all equally interested in the occasion which has called us together, and happy to see with us a few friends from neighboring towns — and while we reverence the memory of those who have gone before us, and who have paved the way for the comforts and luxuries we enjoy, may we not be unmindful of the Great Author of all Good, who has caused our lines to fall in such pleasant places.

On suggestion by the President — Voted, to choose three Vice Presidents.

And accordingly Theodore Gibbs, Davis Stiles and James Libbey, were chosen.

On invitation by the President — the Vice Presidents, the Orator of the day, and all of the Clergymen the town who were present took seats in the desk.

Prayer by Rev. Mr. HAWES.

Music by the Choir — *'Pilgrim Fathers.'*

Address by Hon. MARSHALL CRAM.

Music by the Choir — ORIGINAL SONG.

SHOULD days of yore e'er be forgot,
 And scenes of olden time ?
 Our sires, should they be e'er forgot,
 Who early sought this clime ?
 Then sing aloud those days of yore,
 And scenes of olden time,
 And we'll sing the toils those heroes bore
 Who early sought this clime.

The savage, and wild beasts of prey
 Reigned monarchs of the gloom,
 Unbroken shade obscured the day
 In this their forest home.
 Then sing aloud those days of yore
 And scenes of olden time,
 And we'll sing the toils those heroes bore,
 Who braved this wild-wood clime.

The woodman's axe — the camp-fires' glow,
 Proclaimed their advent here,
 Midst drenching rain and driving snow,
 They *songs of welcome* hear.
 Then sing aloud those days of yore
 And scenes of olden time,
 And we'll sing of songs once sung before
 To those who sought this clime.

Whence came those songs, borne on the air
 Midst primal wildness found ? —
 From howl of wolf, and growl of bear,
 And tempest's raging sound.
 Then sing aloud those days of yore
 And scenes of olden time;
 And we'll sing of songs once sung before,
 To those who sought this clime.

What sought they here — those wand'ers brave,
 That made them hither roam ?
 They sought *themselves* a peaceful grave,
 And *us*, our happy home.
 Then sing aloud those days of yore
 And scenes of olden time,
 And we'll sing those heroes, now no more,
 Who early sought this clime.

Lo ! cultured fields and household fires,
 Unnumbered greet our eyes,
 And happy homes and village spires,
 In beauteous landscape rise,
 Then while we meet in cheerful throng,
 Or feast on plenty's store,
 We'll sing with heart-felt, grateful song
 Of men and days of yore.

On motion by Sewall C. Strout, Esq.,

Voted — That the thanks of the meeting be tendered to Hon Marshall Cram, for his able and interesting address.

On motion by Doct. Nathaniel Pease,

Voted — That the Selectmen of the town, be a committee to request of Hon. Marshall Cram, a copy of his address to be deposited with the records of the town, and that said Selectmen be requested to insert in the warrant calling the next annual meeting, an article, to see if the town will make provision for printing a sufficient number of copies of said Address, to supply each legal voter in town with a copy. And that said committee report to the town the probable expense of such printing.

Music by the Choir — *Ode on Science*.

On motion by Rensallaer Cram, Esq.,

Voted — That the thanks of the meeting be tendered to the Choir, for their valuable and interesting performances.

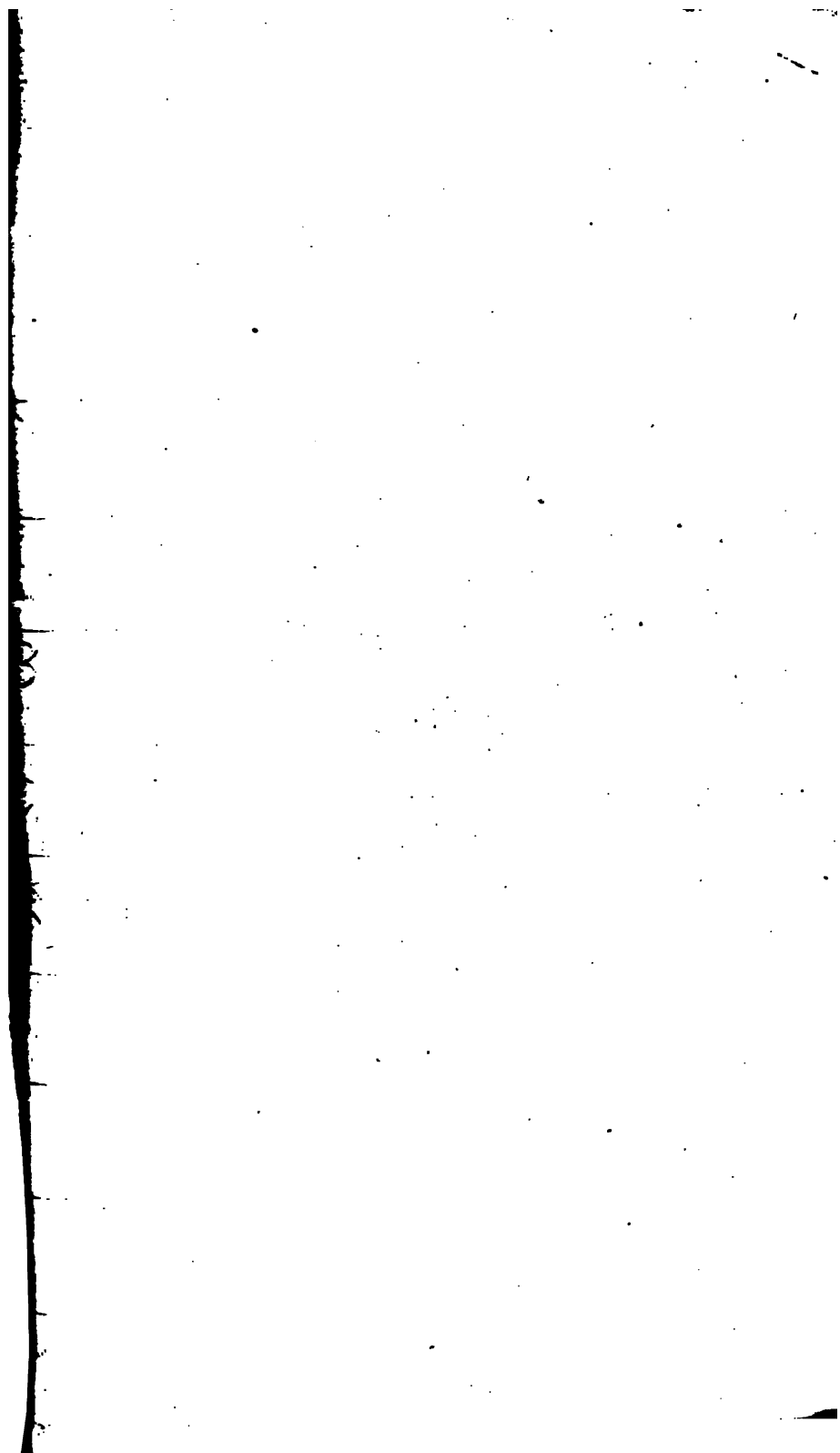
A vote of thanks to the Officers of the meeting, was passed.

The Benediction was pronounced by Rev. Mr. HARRIS, and thereupon, the meeting was adjourned without day.

BUILDING COMMITTEE.

MOSES GOULD,
 LUKE BROWN,
 JOHN KILBORN,
 HORACE BILLINGS.

JOHN P. PERLEY,
 RENSALLAER CRAM,
 WILLIAM T. KILBORN.







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